

MATWATCH

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VOL. 4, NO. 20

SUPERBRAWL EDITION

MAY 20-26

FLAIR FLIPS FUJINAMI; EATON EATS ARN'S TV TITLE

ST. PETERSBURG---After a wearying brutal bloodbath, Ric Flair resorted to his classic bag of cheap finishes, rolling up Tatsumi Fujinami by blatantly pulling trunks to retain the WCW world heavyweight championship in 18:39 in the main event of SUPERBRAWL Sunday night at the Bayfront Center.

Earlier, Bobby Eaton had gained the WCW TV championship, defeating Arn Anderson in 11:50 with the Alabama jam.

Two referees, Bill Alphonso on the outside and Tiger Hatori on the inside, called this one. The crowd, until a few late chants of "U.S.A., U.S.A.," simply didn't appear to know who was the heel and who was the face.

Flair went to a series of chops early but Fujinami countered to work on Ric's legs and back with a bow and arrow hold at 2:40. Fujinami shoulderblocked Flair over the top and stayed ahead until Ric crotched Tatsumi on the rail at 6:48, all the while selling the leg pain.

Flair applied the figure-4 at 7:54 but Fujinami reversed it and scored with the Scorpion at 9:30. He followed with a Saito suplex for a 2 3/4.

Flair rallied for his own suplex and scored four near-falls from Fujinami's bridge attempts. Fujinami came back to rail Flair and open him up at 12:05. Ric heavily sold his loss of blood.

Fujinami powered a series of chops before applying the Inoki octopus at 15:22. Flair made a dramatic escape 45 seconds later. Ric tried a slam on Fujinami but Tatsumi fell on Flair for a 2 7/8 count.

Fujinami followed with an inside cradle for another near-fall. Flair tried to box and chop Fujinami but Tatsumi missed an inside cradle try when Flair kicked out and shoved Fujinami into ref Hatori.

Flair then scrambled to schoolboy Fujinami from behind but in the Flair fashion of the last five years, took the fall by pulling down Tatsumi's trunks

Piledriver-Plus

STEINERS KEEP WORLD BELTS IN THRILLER

ST. PETERSBURG---In arguably the top tag match in the United States this year, Rick and Scott Steiner defeated Sting and Lex Luger in 12:10 to retain the WCW world tag title Sunday night at SUPERBRAWL.

The action was exhausting with every conceivable power move by both teams until a cheap Nikita Koloff interference cost Sting the fall to Scott.

Early on, Lex and Rick traded a respective powerslam and Steiner back suplex. Luger countered with a clothesline and military press.

Sting tagged in at 4:00 and clotheslined Rick out. Scott tagged in at 5:10 and scored a tilt-a-whirl slam on Sting.

(Continued on Page 2)

all of three inches to leverage the pin at 18:39 as Alphonso dashed in to issue the fatal count.

MATCH RATING: POWERSLAM....some tremendous wrestling and brawling in this one but this was a quieter crowd than in most Flair matches, for the aforementioned reasons. And Alphonso had to be blinder than my Aunt Maude not to have seen Flair gripping the tights.

The key thing wrong with this match is that it had to follow the electric world tag team title match.

The match told a story, though not with the usual speed of Eaton's old Midnight Express tag matches.

Strong early counterwrestling until Bobby decked Arn. Arn slammed Bobby face first on the runway at 2:55 but Bobby backflipped Arn from a piledriver try and rallied for a double axhandle off the top rope.

But Arn came back to whip Bobby's thigh into the post twice. Eaton sold it heavily and failed in a suplex try. Arn scored a 2 1/2 count with a spinebuster at 11:00. But Bobby came back for a neckbreaker and slam at 11:26.

As Bobby gambled on a climb to the top, Barry Windham dashed down the runway but Brian Pillman decked Barry before he could run in and chased him back to the dressing room.

Bobby flew off the top with the Alabama jam for the fall and TV title at 11:50. RATING: DRAW-PLUS...a nice pop for the finish but Arn's brutal style doesn't mesh as well with Bobby's aerials.

One other drawback, from a TV standpoint: director Dan Bynum cut away to Pillman chasing Windham after the ref counted one and missed the rest of the pinfall.

(More SUPERBRAWL coverage on page 2, including the MATWATCH 25 SCALE rating of the TV production.)

MATWATCH

Page 2

Vol. 4, No. 20/May 20-26

Fantasia Appears

FREEBIRDS REGAIN U.S. TAG BELTS

ST. PETERSBURG----Abetted by the debut of the masked Fantasia, the Freebirds defeated the Young Pistols in 10:18 to regain the U.S. tag team championship here Sunday night.

The Pistols started quickly on offense with Steve Armstrong ducking a Big Daddy Dink clothesline on the floor and clotheslining Dink and both 'Birds. Brad Armstrong dashed to the ring to even the sides before Dink was ejected.

Both Pistols missed dropkicks from the top rope at 8:22 but rallied as Tracy Smothers scored a flying cross body block on both Freebirds on the floor. Smothers then scored a flying elbow on both Birds but the impact knocked down the ref. Fantasia (Brad Armstrong) came off the top rope and scored DDTs on each Pistol at 9:54. Michael Hayes revived enough for the pinfall at 10:18. MATCH RATING: POWERSLAM, even if it wasn't a clean finish. Lots of high-risk moves and fan enthusiasm.

DAN SPIVEY D. RICKY MORTON: Outside of a brief Morton rollup and futile punches, this was all Spivey power. A DDT, clothesline and modified powerbomb were followed by a Spivey powerbomb for the pin in 3:12. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

NIKITA KOLOFF D. TOMMY RICH: Not a lot here, though few restholds. Tommy scored a near-fall with a rollup at 1:05 but after a closeup of Jeff Bowdren cheering, Tommy missed a cross body block and Nikita followed with a sickle for the pin at 4:05. BOMB-PLUS.

DUSTIN RHODES D. TERRENCE TAYLOR: After a quick near-fall by Dustin, a good bit of stalling. Taylor ducked a cross body at 4:42 and Dustin rolled onto the runway. Taylor rallied until Dustin kicked him in the face off a fly from the top. Dustin scored a bulldog but Alexandra York distracted Nick Patrick. Taylor ambushed Dustin but as Curtis Hughes tried to nail Rhodes with a loaded glove, Dustin ducked and Curtis decked Terry. Dustin scored the pin in 8:04. RESTHOLD.

BIG JOSH D. BLACK BART: Matt brought the two live bears to the ring but they quickly departed. Bart subbed for Larry Zbyszko, still out with a knee injury. Mostly a brawl and Josh won with the buttock in 3:46. Crowd dead. BOMB-PLUS.

DANGER ZONE: Not one of the best ones ever. Paul E. came out dressed as a "New York Cowboy" but most of this was to get a future Stan Hansen-Dustin Rhodes match over. Most interesting speculation: Paul E.'s mike shorted out twice. Was Paul's anger over it a shoot or was it part of the sketch?

OZ D. TIM PARKER: I saw it and I still don't believe it. Yeah, Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodsman and the Cowardly Lion were all there and Oz pulled off the hood to reveal Kevin (Master Blaster) Nash. He destroyed Tim Parker in 28 seconds but the crowd booed the preamble royally. DOUBLE BOMB...and double boo!

TAPED FIST MATCH/BARRY WINDHAM D. BRIAN PILLMAN: Brutal and bloody. Barry started by going for Brian's ribs but Pillman rallied to dropkick Barry off the top, followed by a flying fist. Brian was posted at 2:35 and Barry railed

STEINERS (Continued from Page 1)

Sting's hotshot was followed by a Luger suplex at 6:03 and a Scott rally for an inverted atomic drop, belly-to-belly suplex and 2 3/4 count.

Luger followed a suplex (2 1/2) with a powerslam. As he went for the torture rack, Scott countered it with a Russian leg sweep and Rick bulldogged Lex from the top.

The teams picked up the brawling pace at this point until Scott went for a piledriver on Sting but Sting reversed and scored his own piledriver. Rick saved after a near-fall.

In one of three ref bumps on the night, Luger was attempting to go for a victory move when Sting saw Nikita coming down the runway and pushed Lex away. Sting took a chain to the throat and Scott rolled on top for the pin at 12:10. The Steiners aided him up but Sting dashed after Nikita in the dressing room and the two brawled to the parking lot. RATING: PILEDRIVER-PLUS. The only thing keeping this from a PINFALL! was the finish. I'd have liked to see this one end with a clean conclusion.

Brian from the runway but Brian scored with a savate kick at 3:50. Both were juicing profusely. Barry countered with a suplex before a headcracker collision. Brian scored a suplex at 6:45 and was going for an Air Pillman but Windham threw the ref aside and crotch-punched Brian before pinning him from a superplex at 7:10. POWERSLAM...but the finish was cheap.

STRETCHER MATCH/EL GIGANTE D. SID VICIOUS: El clotheslined Sid out at 1:04. Sid tried a crotch-punch at 1:37 but as he tried a Stinger splash, El kicked him in the face and clawed Sid to the mat for the pin at 2:13. One-Man Gang and Kevin Sullivan ran in after but El destroyed them & deposited Gang on the gurney. Kevin tossed powder in El's face and Gang bashed him with the gurney until El revived. BOMB-PLUS.

THUNDERDOOM CAGE/RON SIMMONS D. BUTCH REED: Sheer brutality with more blood. The crowd seemed to lag except when Simmons went to the offense. Reed tried a piledriver at 5:12 and used Ron as a battering ram into the cage at 6:06. Teddy Long, in a cage above the ring, dropped a chain onto the mat but Reed couldn't use it and Simmons powerslammed him for the pin in 10:40. DRAW...not the best or worst of its kind.

ST. PETE SIDELIGHTS

A pinfall in every match. That's a plus. But why can't we get a few more clean pinfalls like Turner promised when it took over this group...I'll save my comments on the Oz bit. I don't think I can write what I'm thinking tonight....Good production moves: Tony Schiavone doing the dressing room bit with Fujinami before the main event and his work was solid. Jim Ross' background notes were again impressive and Dusty, though still not a polished broadcaster, worked hard at getting the angles over without being intrusive. Stan Hansen coming after Missy in his polkadot shorts was hilarious even if the notion of a woman interviewing an athlete in a shower is ridiculous....Glitches: Paul E.'s audio trouble, two occasions of extraneous audio and two replays which froze. Plus, the aforementioned cutaway from the Eaton pin....Paul E. will replace Gordon Solie in the control center....Seen in closeups: Jeff Bowdren, Bruce Grummett and the Zajicek twins.We'll offer BEST LINES next week.

MATWATCH 25 SCALE: Crowd Enthusiasm, 3.9; Announcers/Hosts, 4.0; Production, 3.8; Quality of Matches, 2.5; Overall Excellence of Show, 3.2. (Maximum 5 pts. in each category.)

TOTAL TV SHOW RATING (scale of 25): 17.4.

MATWATCH

Page 3
Vol. 4, No. 20/May 20-26

TV TEMPO

May 13-19

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]:

Steiners d. Dave Johnson/Mike Maverick; Sting/Lex Luger d. Mark Kyle/Hacksaw Higgins; Ric Flair d. Johnny Rich; Big Josh d. Mike Steele; (REPLAY) Pillman-Windham brawl; Brian Pillman d. Jim Corbett; (LARRY'S LEGENDS) Larry bashes Big Josh w. mike but Josh rallies to swing & miss Larry w. axhandle; Dustin Rhodes d. Doug Vines but when Curtis Hughes/Alexandra York try to bully Dustin into joining York Foundation, Dustin plants big kiss on stunned Alex; (SUPERBRAWL C.C.) Gordon Solie w. Sting/Luger-Steiners video; (6-MAN) Ricky Morton/Junkyard Dog/Tommy Rich d. Tom Burton/Jeff Sword/Joe Cezana. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[WORLD WIDE]: Sting d. Randy Barber; Luger d. Doug Gilbert; Young Pistols d. Lou Fabiano/Higgins; (SUPERBRAWL C.C.) Same as WCW PRO/TBS shows; Pillman d. Vines; Freebirds d. Rick Hardrock/Kip Abee; Steiners d. Jim Boss/Nasty Ned Brady; One-Man Gang wins squash but Ron Simmons runs in until Kevin Sullivan/Teddy Long join to tripleteam until El Gigante saves. RESTHOLD.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: [I-C TITLE] Greg Valentine d. Curt Hennig by DQ when Curt bashes Greg w. Jimmy Hart's helmet; Jim Duggan d. Tom Bennett; (UPDATE) Andre the Giant reject bid by Slick to manage him & stuffs Slick in car trunk; (GUEST) Koko B. Ware sings two gospel songs & whips Bobby Heenan in sing-off; Nasty Boys d. Tom Stone/Doug Wallen; (GUEST) Kerry Von Erich; Roddy Piper d. Rick Martel; Undertaker d. George Anderson; (GUEST) Earthquake w. Damien angle replay; Big Bossman d. Dan Johnson but Nasties run in, handcuff Bubba to ropes for Mountie to cattleprod; (ANGLE) 'Quake cooks snakeburgers out of Damien. Vince knocks them off Tenta's tray; Sgt. Slaughter d. Kevin Krueger; Bret Hart d. Warren Bianchi. DRAW.

(ALL-JAPAN PRO) - [4/29]: Kenta Kobashi d. Dan Kroffat; (PRO WRESTLING NEWS) Preview of next week's 3 matches; (ALL-JAPAN TRIPLE CROWN) Jumbo Tsuruta d. Mitsuharu Misawa to retain titles. POWERSLAM-PLUS.

(NEW JAPAN) - [5/4]: (TOP OF THE SUPER JUNIORS TOURNEY) Jushin Liger d. Owen Hart; (TOKYO DOME...IWGP/NWA WORLD TAG TEAM TITLE) Steiners d. Hiroshi Hase/Kensuke Sasaki to win IWGP, retain NWA belts; (6-MAN) Riki Choshu/Keiji Mutoh/Tatsumi Fujinami d. Scott Norton/Samoan Samu/Kokina. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(LUCHA LIBRE) - Tony Arce/El Vulcano d. El Pelino/El Justiciero 2-3; Kato Kung Lee Jr./El Angel Azteca/El Volaor d. Herodes/El Supremo 1/Kung Fu 2-3; Chavo & Eddie Guerrero/El Dandy d. Mongolian Mauler/Casanova El Vampiraa Cantenea/Fuerza Guerrera 2-3; Dos Caras/Mascara Ano Dos Mil/Universo Dos Mil d. Lizmark/El Rayo de Jalisco Jr./Atlantis 2-3. BOMB-PLUS.

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Bret Hart d. Warlord; Kerry Von Erich d. Ricky Rice; Rockers d. Brian Costello/Johnson; Ted DiBiase d. W.T. Jones; Berserker d. Bill Fox; Koko B. Ware d. Stoney Burke. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[SUPERSTARS]: Ultimate Warrior d. Demolition Smash; (UPDATE) Nasties/Mountie attack on Bossman; Power & Glory d. Dan Robb/Buck Zumhofe; I.R. Schyster d. Red Tyler; Davey Boy Smith d. Tony Squire; (MEAN GENE) DiBiase/Sherri Martel guest; Jake Roberts d. Bennett; Barbarian d. Sonny Blaze. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(LPWA) - [TAG TEAM BATTLE ROYAL] Terri Power/Reggie Bennett win; (REPLAY) Misty Blue Simmes-Heidi Lee Morgan splitup;

Simmes/Morgan d. Candi Divine/Thompson; (LOUISVILLE SUGGER) Jim Cornette w. Simmes/Morgan. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating.

(USWA) - [CHALLENGE]:

Eric Embry/Boogeyman d. Gary Young/Terry Garvin; Terry Daniels d. El Grande Pistolero; (TN STREET FIGHT) Jeff Jarrett/Robert Fuller d. Tom Prichard/Steve Austin; Mascara DeFuego d. El Grande Coloso by DQ; (DOUBLE CHAIN MATCH) Bill Dundee/Danny Davis d. Texas Hangmen. DRAW. [BEST OF CHAMPIONSHIP]: Eric Embry d. Freezer Thompson; (PIPKIN BLDG.) Eddie Gilbert d. Embry; Prichard d. Jack Diamond; Fuller/Jarrett d. Scorpions; Dundee/Davis d. Texas Hangmen by DQ. RESTHOLD.

(PRO WRESTLING '91) - [GA. TITLE] Joel Deaton d. Steve Lawler; Billy Black d. James Myers; Scotty the Body d. Chief Little Lyn; (CLASSIC) Mark Young/Flying Tiger d. Mr. Olympia/Ricky Nelson; (CLASSIC) J.J. Funk d. Super Black Ninja by DQ; (INTL) Cobra Cloud d. Joe Slavure. RESTHOLD.

(AWA: LOOKING BACK) - Jimmy Garvin d. Baron Von Raschke; (6-MAN) Fabulous Ones/Black Jack Lanza d. Larry Zbyszko/Billy Robinson/Mr. Saito; Jerry Blackwell d. Boom Boom Bundy in bloodbath. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Simmons d. Mike Steel; Rhodes d. Burton; Sting/Luger d. Paul Lee/Carl Robertson; El Gigante d. Boss; (REPLAY) El claws on both Barry Windham/Arn Anderson but Sid Vicious bashes El w. gurney; Pillman d. Windham by DQ when Arn runs in. Bobby Eaton saves; (LARRY'S LEGENDS) Larry w. Windham when Pillman ambushes Barry; Eaton d. Jeff Stone but Arn taunts Bobby at ringside. Bobby chases Arn in aisle & chairs him. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: Big Josh d. Brady; (DANGER ZONE) Paul E. w. Arn, who calls Eaton out, then bashes him w. TV belt but Bobby rallies & beats tar out of Arn; Pistols d. Mike Thor/Joe Cruz; Nikita Koloff d. Rick Ryder; Freebirds d. Tim Parker/Tommy Angel; Rhodes d. Barber, then tells Alexandra he'll be at York Foundation meeting Sun. morning; Simmons d. Boss but Angel of Death runs in until Ron clotheslines him out. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(USWA/WMC) - Ben Jordan d. Rob Golden; (PIPKIN BLDG./LOSER LEAVE USWA) Prichard d. Steve Keirn when Embry runs in & uses chain on Steve; (SEGMENT) Embry/Dundee meet w. Eddie Marlin & after long dispute, agree to rematch of previous week's loser-leave Memphis main event; Fuller/Jarrett d. Jack Diamond/Gary Scott. Texas Outlaws ambush Jeff & Robert when distracted by Prichard but faces rally & chair both Outlaws; Hurricane Walker d. The Scorpion; [TIME EXPIRATION MATCH] Eddie Gilbert/Brian Christopher draw vs. Prichard/Tony Anthony when Eddie/Tony both counted out for brawling outside in first fall. In second fall, Eddie uses broom on heels. RESTHOLD.

(PORTLAND) - Larry Oliver d. Doug Masters on reversal; Mike Winner d. Grappler after ref Sandy Barr told Grap used trunks to pin Mike; Bart Sawyer d. Al Madril; (ANGLE) Bruise Brothers attack Rex King until Sawyer saves. NO RATING OFFERED...technical problems prevented last 2 matches from being shown.

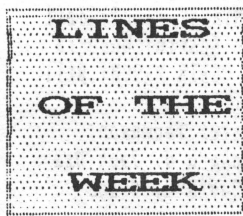
(SOUTH ATLANTIC) - [ALL-REPEAT SHOW]: Ricky Steamboat d. Matt Borne; Jackie Fulton/Chris Chavis d. Dan Grundy/Tommy Landell;

MATWATCH

Page 4

Vol. 4, No. 20/May 20-26

Curtis Thompson d. Mike Rerx; (ANGLE) Vince Torelli accepts Robert Fuller's bid to turn heel; (5-STAR) Royal Family d. Chaz & Floyd Knight; Tommy Seabolt d. Nazi Stormtrooper but "injured" Torelli runs in after. BOMB.



1. Jim Ross, PH: "Missy Hyatt is an alumnus of Florida State. I think she went to orientation." 2. Scotty the Body, PW'91, on Scott Hudson: "I could just play racketball up against your forehead." 3. Paul E. Dangerously/Ross, WCW: (P) "Didn't you used to live in Tulsa?" (R) "Yeah, Paul. Are you writing a book?" (P)

"Yeah, THE JIM ROSS STORY. First chapter: Missy Hyatt." 4. Paul E., PH: "Missy hanging out in a hotel lobby? I never thought I'd see that." 5. Ross, PH: "Mike Steel looks like a survivor of a shipwreck somewhere." 6. Paul E., PH, on Bobby Eaton: "He's going to look like a wine glass thrown out of a window." 7. Roddy Piper/Randy Savage, WWF-SU: (RP) "Earthquake acts like he needs to go to the bathroom." (RS) "I think he's already been." 8. Ric Flair, WCW, on Dustin Rhodes: "His dad and I can never be close friends but we do have a mutual respect for each other." 9. Paul E., PH: "You heard that new song, 'Give Me Just a Couple of Days Off'? Will someone please do that for Gordon?" 10. Jim Cornette, LPWA, on fans: "They haven't taken a bath since Lincoln was President."

11. Cornette, LPWA, on Joe Pedicino: "If YOU were Lady X, I'd understand why she's wearing a mask." 12. Paul E., WCW: "Ron Simmons has more enemies than Nancy Reagan has books written about her." 13. Paul E., WCW: "This guy (Simmons) needs more enemies like a submarine needs a screen door." 14. Dusty Rhodes, WCW PRO, on Dustin: "If he lets me down, I'm takin' him out to the barn and puttin' a boot in his butt." 15. Lance Russell, WCW PRO: "Dollar signs and dolls---that's what goes through Diamond Dallas' mind." 16. Diamond Dallas Page, WCW PRO: "Fujinami is not just your average walk-in talent." 17. Russell, WCW PRO, to Page: "The company you hang out with...and you still haven't introduced me to your young lady." 18. Ross, PH, on Jeff Stone: "I wonder if he was ever a hired hand on the Double Cross Ranch." 19. Boni Blackstone/Samuel F. Kent, WWEU: (SFK) "Jason Hervey and I have bought some property this week and Jason's out signing the papers." (BB) "You buy something on a Monopoly board, Sam?" 20. Scott Hudson, PW'91, on Brute Force: "These guys spend more on mousse every week than I do on gasoline."

21. Hudson, PW'91: "I'd like to alert all the temp services in Atlanta Tom Sawyer will be coming in Monday morning because his wrestling career is over." 22. Craig Johnson, PW'91, on PYTs vs. Myers/Strong: "If you rate this one on a cooking scale, Timmy D doesn't want it to be rare, he wants it well-done." 23. Pedicino, PW'91, on James Myers: "Stick a fork in him." 24. Gordon Solie, WWW, on Pillman: "He takes off like a Patriot missile and puts that scud down for the count." 25. Solie, WWW, on Michael Hayes' apology: "That sounds about as sincere as Saddam Hussein." 26. Pedicino/Cornette, LPWA: (JP) "Cheryl Russa is one of the smallest body-builders in America." (JC) "Why would you want to build small bodies?" 27. Vince McMahon/Piper, WWF-SU: (V) "Paul Roma could be part of that fitness expo." (RP) "Nah, he couldn't get his head in the door." 28. Norman/The Beast, LPWA: (N)

"Me and the Beast had to put our heads together." (B) "Yeah, mine still hurts." 29. Hervey, WWEU: "Soooweee! When I did that, four Boni Blackstones came out." 30. Pedicino/Johnson/Hudson, PW'91: (CJ) "Is this Avenger 1 or 2? (JP/SH) "Yes." 31. Paul E., WCW, to Ross: "Who are you, Run DMC? You don't have enough gold around your neck." 32. Skip Caray, BRAVES, on Pirates disputing call: "This looks like the NWA right now with Eric Gregg the defending champion."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Ross, PH: "Sid Vicious is one of the most overrated wrestlers ever to come through WCW." 2. Larry Zbyszko, WCW PRO: "I retired Sammartino. I retired Bockwinkel. If you're not smart, I'm gonna retire Big Josh." 3. Paul E., PH: "I saw Missy Hyatt's last movie and the only reason I didn't stay 'til the end is the booth was too crowded and I ran out of quarters." 4. Hervey, WWEU, to Blackstone: "Just like your hair color's not gonna last forever, neither am I, baby!" 5. Eddie Gilbert, WMC: "In the past year, I've kinda been to hell and back."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Steven DeTruth, WWEU: "Sid, are you gonna pop up or are you gonna fly out to left field?" 2. Piper, WWF-SU, on Sherri: "Did she get that mascara on a caboose?" 3. Paul E., WCW: "Can you imagine spending part of your week in Sioux City IA?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. HATCHET HEAD (Cornette on LPWA ref). 2. REDNECK GIRL (Cornette on Bambi). 3. GILLIGAN (Paul E. on Mike Steel). 4. TRUCKLOAD OF BEEF (Cornette on Diane Von Hoffman). 5. THE TY-D-BOL MAN (Bart Sawyer on Grappler).

BEST PICTURES - 1. PTW, Vince McMahon knocking snakeburgers out of Earthquake's hands. 2. LPWA, Terri Power suplexing, slamming Von Hoffman. 3. WCW, Eaton-Arn brawl. 4. WWW, Teddy Long's Curly Howard reax to El.

BEST IMPERSONATION - Paul E., PH, doing Terry Funk: "Would somebody please tell him (Jeff Stone) to come home."

HYPE AWARD - Rhodes, WCW PRO: "This is the biggest pay-per-view event in wrestling history throughout the world."

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. McMahon, WWF: "...time will tell." 2. Solie, WWW, on Luger: "...his muscles have muscles."

DREADED GLITCH AWARDS - 1. PORTLAND, for technical foulup forcing repeat of first 2 matches in same show. 2. WORLD WIDE, for graphic calling Nasty Ned "JOHN PETERSON."

BLOOPER AWARDS - 1. DeTruth, PW'91, on Festus: "Here's the hillbilly PETUS." 2. Pedicino, LPWA: "Diane VAN Hoffman." (Says Cornette: "We're not talking about Van Heflin, Van Johnson or Dick Van Dyke...it's VON, Joe.") 3. Jason Hervey, WWEU, for calling minimum wage \$3.35. (It's up to \$4.25).

BOO AWARD - WCW SUPERBRAWL, for cutting away from Bobby Eaton pinfall of Arn Anderson to Pillman chasing Windham.

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Four No-Shows**CACTUS, EDDIE INJURED
AT GOODHART SHOW**

PHILADELPHIA----Cactus Jack (Michael Foley) and Eddie Gilbert both suffered injuries in a brutal barbed-wire fence match Saturday night here before an estimated 1,000.

Cactus collapsed in the dressing room after the match from an apparent heavy loss of blood. After being tossed over the top rope by Gilbert, Cactus became entangled in the wire and suffered severe facial cuts. Gilbert complained of a strained neck and applied an ice pack. Neither was hospitalized. The match was declared no-contest.

The Joel Goodhart-promoted card was plagued by four no-shows, a rarity for a Goodhart show. Austin Idol, Dick Murdoch, Eric Embry and Jeff Jarrett were all billed but did not appear. Dory Funk Jr. was scheduled to replace his injured brother Terry against Murdoch but instead appeared in a run-in during the USWA title match.

The Honky Tonk Man (Wayne Farris) defeated Jerry Lawler for the USWA belt after a trip-up by Funk but the crowd convinced the ref to reverse the decision. Al Perez and Buddy Landell defeated The Fabulous Ones on a reversal after the crowd told the ref of Jim Cornette's use of his tennis racket. In a lackluster finale, Paul Orndorff won over Rick Rude by DQ when Rude inadvertently hit the ref with a chair.

SUMMER SIZZLER: Goodhart's next big production is Aug. 3. It will tie in with a next-day ceremony for Joel's new Wrestling Hall of Fame. Superstar Billy Graham is scheduled for induction.

WINDY CITY: Lots of other indie action Saturday night... Ron Powers defeated Frank (The Tank) Nelson for the Windy City title before 2,500 at the International Amphitheatre in Chicago. Awesome Ondi Anderson d. Lisa Starr for the ladies' belt.

SUNSHINE STATE: In the preamble to SUPERBRAWL, Man Mountain Brody won a 24-man battle royal in the finale for Sunshine Wrestling Alliance (540 announced). Lou Perez kept his SWA Florida belt over Bob Cook. Raul Mata d. Ned Brady and Mohammed Studd d. Mr. Everything to keep the SWA Southern belt.

NEW FACES: Dusty introduced four new characters, in addition to P.N. News, at WCW tapings in Fayetteville NC. Steve Austin premiered as Stunning Steve, managed by Vivacious Veronica. Mark Merro debuted as Johnny B. Badd, managed by Teddy Long, a Little Richard gimmick.

MORE NEW GUYS: Number three was The Diamond Stud (Scott Hall), who had a tryout the previous week, and Billy Jack Haynes finally started under the mask as Black Blood.

BACK TO KANSAS?: Wonder if WCW is getting the message about Oz? Last week's tapings take WCW through June 8 and Oz wasn't on any of them.

BULL DROP: For the June 8 WCW, Paul E. Dangerously visits Dusty's Bull Drop Inn and complains about the DANGER ZONE being bumped from WCW. He then challenges BULL DROP co-host Jason Hervey to appear in a DZ on the June 12 CLASH. Hervey plays an Ed McMahon to Dusty's Johnny Carson.

EARLY START: Steve Austin will go immediately into a program against Bobby Eaton, I'm told, so he can get a crash course in how to work.

GUEST SHOTS: Fabulous Moolah did the first hour of THE LARRY KATZ SHOW Saturday night and plugged her ladies' confab in Las Vegas June 13-15.

MORE GUEST SHOTS: Enjoyed, as always, being on with John Arezzi on PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT in New York Sunday. In the next three weeks, John will offer Moolah (this Sunday), Jim Cornette (June 2) and Rick Rude (June 9).

OVERSEAS: Bob Yorlee is planning another overseas tour in September with a number of U.S. indie stars. On Arezzi's show Sunday, he said he's working on a documentary on the tours.

HOT TICKET?: It appears WRESTLEMANIA'S HISTORY AND HEROES is anything but. Early returns indicate a perilously low buy-rate and I'm not surprised. You can rent virtually all the WMs at the video stores in their entirety for \$1 or \$2.

SUPERSHOW BUYS: I hope to get a final indicator from Sharon Sidello of Turner Home Entertainment this week but it appears the WCW/New Japan SUPERSHOW garnered an 0.6 buy-rate. Profitable but not big bucks, either.

VISITING STARS: The Ultimate Warrior, Randy Savage and a few other WWF stars will be sent in to boost the World Bodybuilding Federation show at the Taj Majal June 15. We're told interest is slack for the much-hyped event.

DOWN FOR THE COUNT?: Frank Dusek canceled his scheduled South Atlantic tapings last Saturday night in Johnsonville SC. It appears SAW is on the brink, coming off TV this summer.

KEIRN OUT: Steve Keirn lost the "loser-leave-USWA-for 30-days" match with Tom Prichard May 13 in Memphis. Eric Embry helped with a chain. Uptown Bruno (to Ms. Texas) and the Texas Hangmen (to Jeff Jarrett and Robert Fuller) lost two of the other loser-leavers. Fuller/Jarrett are now USWA tag champs.

SAY WHAT?: I cannot begin to describe to you the mess created by the Bill Dundee-Embry loser-leave match. Ref Paul Neighbors was decked, revived to count Dundee's shoulders down but raised Bill's hand. Not even Dusty has done that. Saturday on WMC, they had an interminably long taped "meeting in Eddie Marlin's office" to sign a rematch for this past Monday.

ALSO MONDAY: Jarrett/Fuller defended the USWA tag belts against the Texas Outlaws (probably the Hangmen under different masks), Tony Anthony vs. Eddie Gilbert with no stopping for blood, Prichard vs. Hurricane Walker, Ms. Texas vs. Miss Brandywine, Karate Kid vs. Little Tokyo and Chris Candido vs. Danny Davis. Reports of Davis being axed appear premature.

MANAGING SID?: A New York source tells us Paul Orndorff has been having discussions about returning to Titan as Sid Vicious' manager but nothing has been finalized.

SAY WHERE?: Georgia All-Star fans were told Chris Walker and Fabian won the Georgia tag belts at the Edmund Farhat Arena in Douglas GA. There ain't no such animal.

KEEP 'EM COMING: Keep sending cards of get well to 1988 MATWATCHER OF THE YEAR Dan Gibson at 2301 Dorothy St., Waycross GA 31501. He is making steady progress from a stroke.

Mother's Day weekend can be one culprit but it's far from the only one. Cable television ratings for pro wrestling shows dropped to their lowest levels since late December 1988 for the week ending May 14 and at least one of the "big two" groups has mandated some adjustments.



Steve Beverly

The five cable shows collectively averaged only a 2.0 rating for the week, just slightly above the 1.9 median for the week ending Jan. 2, 1989. The average program was seen in only 1.14 million homes.

Ironically, two of the WCW shows posted increases over previous-week levels while WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING continued an alarming four-week downward trend.

For the first time since the inception of TBS' POWER HOUR in June 1989, the Saturday morning repeat-match series outranked the flagship Saturday night WCW episode. POWER HOUR scored a 1.8 while WCW fell to a 1.7 (982,000 homes), its lowest mark since the summer of 1989 when it was still being shuttled all

over the TBS schedule. This comes as TBS was hoping to build a strong base for Sunday night's SUPERBRAWL.

The two WWF shows on USA led the week but both suffered drastic, half-point falls. ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING finished on top with a 2.3 rating (down 18% from the previous week) but part of its slippage can be blamed on the historical drop in audience levels on Mother's Day. But the same cannot be said for PRIME TIME WRESTLING, which dipped 18% to 2.2 in its Tuesday night slot with only a 3.5 per cent share of audience.

While MATWATCH has been unable in recent weeks to get regular tabulations on syndicated ratings, we learned in the past week TBS executives have been disappointed in lack of improvement in rating levels for syndie shows and the WGN/Chicago program.

WCW announcers were told in the past week the company considers the numbers in syndication (which rarely top a 2 national rating on individual shows) "an embarrassment" and the WGN ratings "dismal." While WGN does not sell advertising for a national market, the superstation---seen in 46 million homes---many weeks fails to draw a 1 national rating. The WPIX/New York show has rallied back to a 2.9 level after two weeks of slippage after the WCW Meadowlands show. MATWATCH missed two returned phone calls from WCW chief Jim Herd to discuss the situation in the last week but will attempt to get further comment this week.

The WCW commentators have reportedly been given a directive to cut sharply back on plugs for TBS CLASH specials and pay-per-views on syndicated shows and use them predominantly to push matchups to build the anemic arena show attendance. TBS will be considered the primary vehicle to market the CLASH and pay events.

Whereas many insiders have noted improvement in the focus and matchups on WCW television since Dusty Rhodes' return as booker, WCW president and Turner Program Services chairman Jack Petrik has been critical of the formats looking almost identical for cable and syndication. Despite many hardcore fans' disdain for the comedy format of USA's PRIME TIME WRESTLING, the framework of the Titan series is clearly differentiated from Vince McMahon's syndicated output. Pressure is said to be bearing on WCW syndie executive producer Tony Schiavone.

CABLE

<u>Week Ending May 14</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Share</u>	<u>Total Homes</u>
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 5/12)	2.3	8.3	1.3 million
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 5/14)	2.2	3.5	1.25 million
WCW MAIN EVENT (TBS 5/12)	2.1	5.5	1.19 million
WCW POWER HOUR (TBS 5/11)	1.8	8.2	1.05 million
WCW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 5/11)	1.7	4.8	982,000

Since assuming his role in the spring of last year, Schiavone has spiced up the graphic look of the show but the recent shows bear more of the stamp of Rhodes, who---with the exception of elements such as the SUPERBRAWL Control Center---has always favored more of a no-frills approach to taping. Special segments (DANGER ZONE, LARRY Z's LEGENDS, i.e., are not well-marketed or graphically introduced to create associations with specific series. With WCW paying a figure reportedly between \$10,000-15,000 a week for the WGN time, it is looking for better payoffs in the audience numbers.

Some WCW insiders chalk up the 1.7 for WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP to the weak 0.8 lead-in from FISHIN' WITH ORLANDO WILSON, which WCW more than doubled. But another TBS exec says WILSON isn't the culprit. "They've had fishing as a lead-in during the winter and spring for a long time and done better than this," said the official. "It seems to me that when they give people something they want to see, they watch. Wrestling has always been more of a tune-in than lead-in show." The same week a year ago, WCW drew a 2.5.

Certainly, even McMahon has to be puzzled why PRIME TIME, which has taken on new life in its revamped format, would tumble against network programming which did not draw unusually high ratings. True, it could be a one-week fluke but if these shows stay below the 2.5 level, red flags have to rise. Even the Terry Funk episode of QUANTUM LEAP only drew a 10.9 rating and 18 share on NBC, down from the previous week's 12.8/23. The show was the first QL to be outrated by CBS' 48 HOURS.

Yes, ratings are cyclical and rallies will occur. But one has to wonder what the message is when a major promotion registers weak numbers one week away from a much-ballyhooed payable event.

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